

WHAT'S *New* in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers
in the District of Columbia*

Friday, March 3, 2006

MPDC STEPS UP EFFORTS TO CLOSE UNSOLVED MURDERS

The MPDC has launched a major new initiative to encourage people to come forward and provide information that will help solve more of the city's unsolved homicides. One element of the strategy involves the printing and distribution of fliers detailing unsolved murders from the recent past. Beginning with 2006 cases and working backward, the Department is creating customized fliers that contain basic information about each unsolved homicide, including contact information for the lead detectives and, in many cases, pictures of the victims. In addition to being posted on the MPDC website, the fliers are being distributed in the communities where the crimes took place as part of the re-canvassing effort by police in the affected neighborhoods. The fliers emphasize that the Department currently offers rewards of up to \$25,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for any unsolved homicide committed in the District of Columbia. In addition to the fliers, the MPDC this month has joined with a number of community-based, anti-violence organizations in a public awareness campaign called "Real guns kill real people." Approximately 400 posters containing the names and pictures of recent young homicide victims are being displayed on Metrobuses across DC. Metrobus riders are encouraged to contact the police if they have any information about these or other crimes. The project is a collaborative effort of the MPDC, Kendra Smith Family Lifeline Movement, Mothers of Unsolved Murders, Reaching Out to Others Together, and Mothers On the Move Spiritually. Finally, the MPDC will be publishing three full-page ads this month in the Washington Post, District Extra section containing information about unsolved crimes and wanted persons in DC.

CRIME LEVELS UNCHANGED DURING FEBRUARY

The number of serious crimes reported to the police last month was essentially unchanged from the number reported in February 2005, according to preliminary statistics from the MPDC. There were 2,292 serious crimes reported in DC last month, compared with 2,306 for the same month last year. While violent crime was down overall in February, driven by reductions in sexual assaults (-23%) and assaults with a deadly weapon (-19%), there were increases in robberies (+17%) and homicides, which rose from 8 to 17. Among property crimes, stolen autos (-3%) and thefts from auto (-7%) were down last month, while other thefts (+7%) and burglaries (+4%) increased. Through the first two months of the year, reported crime in the District is up by about seven-tenths of 1 percent, according to the preliminary statistics. The year-to-date trends in different crime types generally reflect the patterns in February. So far this year, five of the seven police districts have recorded decreases in serious crime; the First and Third districts have registered increases.

- ① View the unsolved homicide fliers by going to:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1243,q,541992,mpdcNav_GID,1533.asp
- ① Following the senseless fatal shooting of a bystander on U Street, NW — the result of an argument by other individuals over a parking space — the MPDC has increased the reward in this case to up to \$50,000. Details at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1243,q,541992,mpdcNav_GID,1533.asp
- ① With the approach of the one-year anniversary of the shooting that killed 9-year-old Donte Manning on 13th Street, NW, the MPDC continues to offer a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to an arrest and conviction. See the flier at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/frames.asp?doc=/mpdc/lib/mpdc/serv/solvers/unsolved/pdf/manning_donte.pdf&group=1533
- ① View the latest preliminary crime statistics for each of the seven police district and DC as a whole at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,q,543329.asp>
- ① Reported burglaries in DC are up 7 percent through the first two months of 2006. Learn how you can help protect your home from burglars by going to:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,547557,mpdcNav_GID,1553,mpdcNav_|.asp

UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT OF DC'S DISTRACTED DRIVING LAW

In the 18 months that DC's Distracted Driving Law has been in effect, more than 11,000 motorists have been cited for driving while talking on a hand-held cell phone and more than 1,500 drivers have been cited for other distractions, according to the latest data from the MPDC. In addition, police have issued more than 8,000 warnings to drivers for cell phone and other distractions since July 2004. Enacted in the summer of 2004, the Distracted Driving Safety Act makes it illegal for motorists to use a mobile phone or other electronic device while driving in DC, unless the telephone or device is equipped with a hands-free accessory. The penalty for violating the law is \$100, although first-time violators can have the fine suspended by providing proof of having acquired a hands-free accessory. There are no points imposed on violators of the Distracted Driving Safety Act. Since enforcement of the law began, police have cited 11,160 motorists specifically for violating the cell phone ban, including 7,491 in 2005. Another 1,529 motorists (973 in 2005) have been cited for other distracted driving violations, and there have been 18 tickets written for cell phone violations involving school bus drivers or drivers operating on a learner's permit. The law prohibits these drivers from using any electronic device, even with a hands-free accessory, except when making an emergency call. In addition to the Notices of Infraction, police issued 6,751 warnings for cell phone distractions and 1,337 warning for other distractions.

THIRTY-ONE NEW OFFICERS HITTING THE STREETS OF DC

Patrols in DC neighborhoods are being boosted by the addition of 31 officers who were sworn in during graduation ceremonies Friday afternoon at the Town Hall Education Arts and Recreation Campus (THE ARC) in Southeast. The new officers include 24 recruits, who recently completed approximately 24 weeks of training at the MPDC's Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science. In addition, the Department graduated seven "lateral-hire" officers, or experienced officers who are hired from other law enforcement agencies. The current class of lateral hires includes officers from police departments in San Juan, PR; Durham, NC; Montgomery County, MD, and Takoma Park, MD, as well as US Border Patrol and the US Army Criminal Investigations Command. Because they are experienced law enforcement professionals, the lateral officers complete a condensed training program that focuses on DC law and MPDC policies and procedures. All of the newly graduated officers are being assigned to neighborhood patrols in Police Service Areas (PSAs) throughout the District. In his remarks to the new officers, Executive Assistant Chief Michael Fitzgerald reminded them that the "number one" priority of the MPDC is the safety of DC residents. "Even with all of the other issues and challenges and responsibilities facing our Department, we are more focused than ever before on fighting crime and improving the quality life in our neighborhoods. After today, each of you begins your new assignments in one of our PSAs, and neighborhood safety becomes your 'number one' priority as well," he said.

NEWS & NOTES

Public Safety Town Hall Meeting. Councilmember Chairman Phil Mendelson, chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, will host a citywide town hall meeting on public safety on March 9, at 6:30 pm, at Savoy Elementary School, 2400 Shannon Place, SE, across from the Anacostia Metro Station. The town hall meeting, "From Criminal Investigation to Incarceration and Beyond," will bring together DC's public safety officials to listen and respond to resident concerns. ROC-East Assistant Chief Willie Dandridge is scheduled to represent the MPDC.

Civilian Job Vacancies. The MPDC continues to accept applications for a variety of civilian career opportunities involving operational, administrative and technical assignments. Get complete information on current vacancies, including qualifications, salaries, and application deadlines and procedures, by visiting <http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,538142.asp>.

① Detailed information on DC's law, including definitions and legislative history, can be found at: http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1240,q,547851,mpdcNav_GID,1552,mpdcNav,j.asp

① For more information on the lateral hiring process for experienced officers in the MPDC, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,538023.asp>

DATA BOX

Homicides as of 3/3/06
◆ 2006: 31
◆ 2005: 23
◆ % Change: +34.8%
◆ Closure Rate: 41.9% (13 closures)

Adult Arrests week end. 2/25/06
◆ Total: 930
◆ Weapons: 27
◆ Robbery: 7
◆ Auto Theft: 16
◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 35

Juvenile Activity week end. 2/25/06
◆ Arrests: 69
◆ Curfew Violators: 41
◆ Truants: 50

Firearm Recoveries as of 2/28/06
◆ February: 198
◆ 2006 Total: 446

Traffic Fatalities as of 3/3/06
◆ 2006: 9
◆ 2005: 8
◆ % Change: +12.5%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with Crimereports.com.

mpdc.dc.gov